

Great Kids Pediatrics

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STARTING SOLIDS

Babies are able to start solid foods at 4 months of age but may wait until 6 months of age if parents prefer. When starting solid foods try only one new food in a 4-5 day period; this is because we are testing for food allergies. Symptoms of a food allergy can be anything from a mild rash around the face to a full body rash. If your child presents with these symptoms after trying a new food please call our office between the hours of 8:30am -5pm to discuss this issue.

It is suggested to start your child on Rice Cereal (stage 1) first as this is the best tolerated by babies. You can mix the cereal with either Breast Milk, Formula or Water. Mix cereal so it is the consistency of apple sauce not too runny but not too thick. Feed your child the cereal with a baby spoon starting with one or two bites on day one and increasing as tolerated by your baby. Most babies will stick out their tongue and push the food out for the first couple days. This is normal as they are learning to swallow more solid foods.

After testing the rice cereal you can move to Oatmeal then Barley then mixed grains. After testing all the cereals for 4-5 days each move on to vegetables. Start with yellow vegetables first (carrots, squash, sweet potatoes). Then green vegetables next (peas, green beans). After you test all the stage 1 vegetables you can move onto the fruits. Do not offer fruits before vegetables because babies will get use to the sweetness of the fruits and refuse the vegetables.

Foods should be given once a day for the first 2-4 weeks, then increased to twice a day for a month, then increase to three times a day. Allow your child to decide how much to eat. When they close their mouth or turn their head this usually means they are finished eating. Foods should be given 1-2 hours before milk or 1-2 hours after milk so your baby isn't too hungry and isn't too full. They will be able to concentrate more on eating during this time.

Some babies may take to eating well while others may need a little more practice. Normally the first couple of days babies will try only a few bites and become disinterested with the feeding. When your child closes their mouth or turns away they are done eating. Make feeding time fun if your child gets frustrated or disinterested do not continue the feed stop and try again tomorrow.

Your baby should start on Stage 1 foods and may move up to Stage 2 foods when they are sitting by themselves and rolling over (around 6 months of age). They may increase to Stage 3 foods when they are pulling themselves to stand and crawling (around 7-9 months of age). Begin finger & table foods after 9 months of age.

Your baby's milk consumption should not decrease with the start of solid foods as the belly will begin to expand. Whole milk can be introduced after your child turns one year old. It is suggested that you slowly transition from Breast Milk or Formula to whole milk to prevent constipation.

Foods to Avoid

No Eggs or Honey until 1 year of age

No Nuts or Shellfish until 2 years of age

Citrus fruits should be avoided for young babies as these are very acidic and may cause babies to have upset tummies or a rash.